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CHIEF COUNSEL

February 25, 1964

Mr. W. M. Adair

Sherwood, Oregon

Morris Adair

Dear Mr. Adair:

This will acknowledge receipt of your recent very comprehensive history of the early days at Cannon Beach. I found your resume' extremely interesting and you mention several incidents of which I had only cursory knowledge.

We will look into your specific suggestions and will take whatever action seems to be indicated. It will probably take us some little time to thoroughly investigate these matters but we will get to each one as we can.

Thank you very much for this information. It will be made a permanent record in our library.

Very truly yours,

Forrest Cooper
State Highway Engineer

By

R. L. Porter
Deputy State Highway Engineer

RLP:ms

Sherwood, Oregon 625-6736
February 14, 1964
8335 Honeker Rd
Tigard 97223

State Highway Department
Salem, Oregon.

Gentlemen:

Having spent a large portion of my boyhood days on Cannon Beach, dating back to September 1889, when I made my first trip there with my parents, brother and baby sister, who was born August 3, 1889, I am naturally greatly interested in the Beach, and may have gathered some historical facts which are not of record in your Department, or anywhere else. For that reason, I am submitting some matters to you, with suggestions, to which I hope you will give some consideration.

There, no doubt, is another cannon buried in the bed of the small stream which meets the Ocean about two miles north of Arch Cape, near the spot where one cannon is now mounted. I would like to see the second cannon unearthed and mounted along with the one that is now there. It should not be too much of a task now, with a metal finder and a dozer. If the cannon should be found, it would surely add another attraction for the beach.

Your files, no doubt, show the origin of the beach's name, and other important facts concerning the development of the beach. However, in the event I may know something that has been overlooked, I'll begin with the origin of the name.

The beach acquired its name from two cannon which washed ashore on a portion of the deck of the U. S. Gunboat Shark, which was wrecked on Clatsop Spit in August 1846. Sometime after the wreck John Hobson, Phin Farren, William Morrison of Clatsop Plains, and possibly others were heading down the beach on foot, having taken the Indian trail leading over Tillamook Head from Seaside, when they came across a portion of the Shark's deck, still awash of the breakers with the two cannon upon it. They removed the guns and rolled them up the hard sand caused by the stream, as far as the drift wood, where it was thought the stones in the bed of the creek would keep the cannon from sinking very much. When the party returned from the beach they told of their find, but it seems no one ventured to make the hazardous journey to the beach, to check on the story for sometime, probably a few years. It was shortly before the California Gold Rush and, no doubt, most men had gone there. My grandmother, in her dairy of April 1849 states all of the Astoria men, except three, had gone to the gold fields. When the region where the cannon were supposed to be, was investigated, no evidence could be found that they had ever come ashor. The cannon story became somewhat of a myth, and there were those doubted its truth. My father, Samuel D. Adair, knew the men who had found the cannon, and never gave up the hope, that some day the guns would be washed out by the sea. Not until more than half a century after the wreck of the Gunboat Shark, was there definate proof that the cannon had been rolled up the beach and left in the bed of the stream. Following a terrific storm, not long after the turn of the century, one cannon was washed out. Over a period of over fifty years, attempts were made from time to time, to dig up the guns by hand, but the water and quick-sand, and lack of equipment brought about failures.

Just when the beach acquired its name, I do not know but it must have been shortly after the cannon washed ashore. For years it was just as common to hear the beach referred to as "Elk Creek", instead of Cannon Beach. The original Cannon Beach Post Office was established May 29, 1891, and was located near the site of the mounted cannon. James P. Austin, original owner of the property, operated a hotel there, and was appointed the first Post Master. He and Mrs Austin conducted the affairs of the office in the hall of their hotel. Following Mr Austin's death in 1895, Mrs Austin was appointed Post Mistress. The Cannon Beach Post Office was abandoned November 30, 1901, and the beach was without a Post Office until November 25, 1910, when a new Post Office was established near the mouth of Elk Creek, and given a new name- Ecola- the Indian word for whale. Twenty years before, the Lewis and Flanders families had established their summer home on the present Site of Ecola State Park, which they named Ecola. No wonder they were displeased by having the Post Office and surrounding community take over their name which was well known throughout the County. Although there was great confussion over the identical names, which referred to places only a few miles apart, the names existed for about eleven and a half years, when on May 25, 1922 the name of the Post Office was changed to Cannon Beach. Thirty-one years before, the original Cannon Beach Post Office had been established six or seven miles down the beach.

The winter of 1893-1894, which our family spent on father's preemption, there was one mail in to Cannon Beach, and one out, a week. Of course that was long before the creation of the Rural Free Delivery. I believe, it came into existance about the time the Cannon Beach Post Office was abandoned, in November 1901. In our day, the mail sacks were made of heavy leather, and were a load in themselves. The Cannon Beach mail would be placed in a bag at Seaside and locked. It could not be opened, except by the Cannon Beach Post Master who had a key. The mailman was not permitted to pick up or deliver mail between the two Post Offices. In the Summer mail was more frequent, as the carrier could use a horse as far south as Cannon Beach. During three months in winter, he walked most of the time, as the wind-fall would block the road for weeks at a time. His route was from Seaside to Nehalem. The first day out, he would walk from Seaside to the Austin House. His arrival would depend on the weather and tide. The second day he would make Nehalem, where he would lie over a day. When we had completed our required residence on our claim, late in February 1894, the road over the mountain was impassable for a team, and been so for about three months. Father came down to the beach with five saddle horses, and we all rode back to Seaside. We encountered a number of huge spruce trees across the road. Trails had been cut around the up-rooted trees, so as to enable a horse to get through. It was a toll road, but the tolls in winter didnot amount to anything. Therefore the removal of the wind-fall depended upon volunteer labor, as the County provided no funds for work on the Elk Creek road. The sticky clay mud on "Cedar Tree Hill", the steepest grade on the mountain, was so deep the horses could hardly take a step. Our mail around Christmas 1893 was so heavy, I don't know how the poor mailman managed to lug it all. All of our friends and relatives felt sorry for us, and did everything possible towards making our Christmas a cheeryone.

When we moved down to Cannon Beach in July 1893, it took us two full days to make the journey from Seaside. There was no bridge across the Nechanicum, above Ben Holladay's bridge which led into the grounds of the Holladay House. Therefore, the River had to be forded about

about half a mile above the Holliday bridge, as the Elk Creek road ran up the Nechanicum bottom on the west side of the River, winding its way around, and between huge spruce trees towering towards the sky. The trees were so close together, the sun could not reach the narrow road and dry out the black river bottom mud, which was belly deep in many places. We had left our farm, which was located about two miles west of Fort Clatsop, the day before, with two four horse teams hitched to dead-ax farm wagons, loaded with household goods and supplies sufficient to last eight months. Our family traveled in a two horse spring wagon, driven by my older brother Henry. Father drove one of the four horse teams. The hack contained mother and five of us youngsters ranging from twelve to one years of age. The trip down the Clatsop Plains was uneventful, but I do have memories of walking a good part of the way, through the heavy sand, urging our cow which was being led behind the wagon, to keep moving. We made an early departure from Seaside, and after ten hours of floundering through the river bottom mud, we reached a slight elevation at about what is now the Cannon Beach Junction, where a settler had abandoned his claim. There was an acre or two of cleared land and an orchard. We camped there for the night, where there was plenty of grass for our 10 horses. One farm wagon had slid into a chuck hole, crushing a hind wheel. A single-tree had also broken during the day. The disabled wagon had to be left on the road-side, but most of its load had been lashed onto the spring wagon, where one seat had been removed, making space for mattresses and bedding, which some of us rode on. The load of the other farm wagon was also increased. Two of the four horses relieved of their burdens, were hitched as leaders for the spring wagon. The other team was used in emergencies, where six horses were required to pull a wagon out of a hole, or up a steep hill. On the second day on the Elk Creek road, we ran into more soft bottom land, along the "Little Muddy". (I notice there is no longer a marker on the bridge crossing this stream, giving its name. I think there should be one) The original road over the Mountain had two distinct summits, with marshy land between the two hog-backs. In order to make this stretch of low land road passable, the narrow roadway had been covered with spruce split puncheons about four inches through, and ranging from a foot to two feet wide. Even though it was pretty rough traveling over the puncheons, especially in a dead-ax wagon, it was a relief to have solid footing for the horses and wagons, and cow. We passed through the Elk Creek toll gate late in the afternoon, and had to wait a little while for the tide to fall enough to make it safe for us to Ford Elk Creek. The toll gate was about 600 feet north of the present bridge across the Creek, and was within shouting distance from Mr Logan's Elk Horn House, where the key to the gate was kept. Three experienced drivers had accompanied us from Seaside, Sam Russell, Johnny Starr and Alex Duncan. Sam Russell had driven an ox team across the Plains in the mid 40's. He accompanied us on down the beach, and lived with us in a cabin on our place for a few years. He was killed by a falling rock, while walking around Arch Cape. Johnny Starr, I believe was a native of the Nechanicum Valley, and a member of the Leberman Family which settled there in the late 40's. Alex Duncan was a young husky half-breed Indian from outside of Oregon. He had been Mr Logan's teamster for a number of years, and eventually spent the remainder of his life around Elk Creek and Seaside, where he died in the 1950's. We completed our journey, rounding Hug Point on the recently completed rock road at about sun-set. The north boundary line of our claim was between Hug Point and the water-falls. There were three points extending into the Sea on our place, which had acquired the following names;

Adair Point, which was just south of the waterfall; south of it was Point Meriwether, followed by Asbury Point. As far as I know Adair Point and Point Meriwether bear no names. Asbury Point is now well known as Austin Point, which name is very appropriate and should not be changed. However, in the event Adair Point and Point Meriwether have not been re-named , I would like to suggest that their original names be restored, and markers identifying them erected along the Highway. Asbury Point was named after an English gentleman, and friend of Mr Logan, a "remittance man", who was the son of a very high born Englishman. Mr Asbury was one of the original settlers. His place was one claim north of Joe Walsh's place, which was on the creek just north of Arch Cape. Mr Asbury was a civil engineer and laid out the toll road over Tillamook Head for Mr Logan. I believe he also laid out the claims along the beach. For a number of months, father had a man building a road leading from the beach, midway between Adair Point and Point Meriwether, to the site of our house. That road built nearly 75 years ago, is the one that now connects the Hug Point Parking Area with the beach. Our house stood in about the center of the Parking Area. We had four or five acres cleared and seeded to grass for our cow and horses. All of the second growth timber now surrounding the Area has grown up since the turn of the century. Even now, the remains of a few stumps created 75 years ago can be seen along-side the second growth timber.

Along in the late 1880's, my father and about a dozen other men became interested in developing Cannon Beach. The area most accessable, and most desired lay north of Silver Point, but it was not large enough to supply everyone with a half mile or so of beach fronted. It was, therefore decided to divide the beach north of Arch Cape into the desired number of tracts, reducing the acreage in the most desired parcels; and then draw lots for turns to make selections. Father drew a number which gave him next to the last chance, and naturally the choice property had already been selected. The acreage ran from 15 to 120 and all lay in Sections 18 and 23 In Township 4 north, Range 10 West of the W. M. I believe that father got about half a mile of frontage on his preemption of about 88 acres. Included in the groupe were four English gentlemen. Mr Logan was one of the four, but I believe he already owned beach property on both sides of Elk Creek and didnot participate in the drawing. The others were Joe Walsh, Bell and Asbury, who had the first three claims north of Arch Cape. Then came Clark Carnahan, J. P. Austin, S. D. Adair, Sabine, Bobby Norris, J. N. Griffin, who I believe acquired Ed McGuire's claim; L. Mansur, James Maher and Frank Brailer. Warren had a place on the northern end of the beach, but I don't believe he participated in the drawing. He may have acquired his land from Frank Brailer. Mr Mansur's son Leonard still lives on his father's claim, and Mr Griffin's daughter also lives on her father's place.

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There is a spruce tree on the right edge of the trail leading from Indian Town, now known as Indian Beach, to Ecola Park. I believe it is at the first or second turn after crossing the stream. There is a three quarter inch steel cable embeded in the bap of the tree. If anyone ever did notice it, he would no doubt have thought it was the remains of a logging operation. Such is not the case, however, and I believe it would be of interest to the hikers, if a marker were placed on the tree stating the facts. It was made fast to the tree in 1895 by my father, with me standing by. In the Summer of that year which father was employed by the U. S. Engineers as cons-

truction foremen on the first Columbia River jetty,, which job he had held, off and on. since 1889, depending on Federal appropriations, He was detailed to land a telephone cable from Tillamook Rock Lighthouse to Indian Beach. At that time, the Coast Guard had not been formed, so the Engineer Department performed all construction work of the Life Saving Service, and that of the Lighthouse Department. The two Lighthouse tenders operating out of the Columbia were under the command of the District Engineer. It was arranged for the Tender Manzanita to take the cable aboard and proceed to the Rock, where one end of the cable was to be made fast; and then go South until opposite Indian Beach, where she would anchor and send her whale boat ashore with a three quarter unch manila rope. Father was given the job, because he was familar with the area, and had the necessary equipment and horses to handle the job. He selected from his jetty gang of Scandinavians four of the most able to handle the job, and started from our ranch for Elk Creek in a four horse farm wagon,loaded with horse feed,camping equipment,provisions chains,block and tackles saws, axes,picks shovels etc. They made the trip in one day. The next two days were spent in swamping out the old Indian trail to Indian Beach. The day before the expedition was to leave Elk Creek,Father drove down the beach to our place and picked up my brother Henry and me to accompany the party to Indian Beach, just for the experience, which was something. We spent the night at the Elk Horn House, where the men were lodged, and got away early the next morning. The four horses were harnessed, and the wagon load of supplies were lashed on to the harnesses. This operation must have taken a couple of hours. Our progress was slow through the swampy low land North of Elk Creek. We had not gone very far, when the horse bringing up the rear floundered in the muck which the three advance horses had stirred up. He was hopelessly mired, and even after his pack was removed, could not get out of the mud-hole under hisown power. Therefore two of the other horses had to be unpacked to form a team to pull the shiverly animal out of the mud. We finally got the horse out,repacked the three horses and were on our way. In the afternoon, we reached high land, where the trail led to the cliff, way above the Ocean. The path had been cut into the sand-stone bluff, and was so narrow, the horses had to be unpacked and led past the most dangerous place. This meant the supplies had to be carried by hand, and repacked again. It was about sun-down when we reached our destination, but managed to set up camp and get dinner cooking before dark. We camped in a little valley, where the creek disappeared into a high natural dam of stones, before reaching the Ocean. I believe that the bed of the little creek on Indian Beach must have washed out about 25 feet since 1895. and greatly narrowed, for at that timewas a grassy little valley, wide enough for us to pitch our tent and tether the four horses. The grass helped out with our limited horse feed. I am sure that the spruce tree to which the telephone cable is fastened, was only a very few feet above the creek. The next two days were spent in digging a trench for the cable through the stoney mouth of the stream, and under the drift-wood to the sandy portion of the beach. That job was mostly hand work, as the stones were too large for shovels. In making the ditch, three dug-outs with human skeletons were unearthed. One was that of a child. There must be any number of such dug-outs still under the stones, as that area is said to have been an Indian burying ground. Father was working on a schedule arranged ten days, or more, before he undertook the job, and had to be ready to haul the cable in from the Manzanita when she arrived off shore at 4 A. M. of a certain day, which was the third morning after our arrival on the beach. The tide was at a stand-still at that hour, and by the time the ship had sent a line ashore, would begin to flow over the steep narrow beach, where the teams had to do their tugging.

On the morning of the day the cable was to be landed, my brother and I were on the beach before breakfast, and had walked south to a point from which the Lighthouse could be seen. There was day light enough for us to see the Manzanita standing-by a short distance from the Rock. We returned to camp with the news that the ship was in sight. By the time breakfast was over and the horses hitched, we could see the Tender off shore about two miles west of our operations, where she dropped anchor and lowered her whale-boat. It was a double ender with three oars on each side, with a man to each oar. The sea was as smooth as glass, and it was only a few minutes before the boat was beached, and our two teams were pulling on the new manila rope. The other end of the rope was attached to the cable, which was being paid out from the Ship's deck. All went well for a while, but the load was becoming heavier and heavier as the cable continued to slide over the Tender's gunwale. The cable had to be kept moving, otherwise it would have sunk into the quick-sand, and all would have been lost. Therefore, there was no breathing spell for the horses. When there was only one team on the line, the remaining team could hardly keep the load moving. When the teams were returned for new bights on the line, they were kept on the run, and into the Ocean, belly deep, before they were turned landward, and attached to the line. A few hours after the tide had turned, the sea became pretty rough, and the sandy portion of the beach greatly narrowed. The boat's crew remained on the beach to take the rope back to the ship. The surf had become so rough, it required two of the crew to handle the boat on the beach. The other four father put to pulling on the line with the horses, and three of father's gang. He drove one of the teams, and my brother and I tried to keep the rope out of the way. There were coils and coils of it. The beach had narrowed to such extent, two horses were on the line at the same time, only momentarily, and the traveling buoy attached to the line, where the cable and rope were joined, was still bobbing around beyond the breakers. However, the horses and men held out long enough to bring the line ashore and have enough cable to reach the spruce tree. When the boatmen came ashore, they brought a telephone, which father hung onto the tree and attached its wire to the copper one in the cable. Communication was then carried on with the Lighthouse keepers. That was the first telephone in Clatsop County outside of Astoria. The Government had itsown telegraph line running from Ft Stevens to Astoria, but no telephone was at the Fort, before it was connected with Indian Beach. The telephone on Indian Beach was the first one I had ever seen, and the first one I ever spoke over. The telephone line from the beach to Seaside, ran from tree to tree. During the first winter it was out of commission most of the time. As early as March 2, 1889, the Congress had made an appropriation of $6,000.00 to be used in running a telephone line from Ft Stevens to Tillamook Lighthouse. During that year the line was completed as far as Seaside, but the funds had become exhausted. The Rock was to be reached from the north side of Tillamook Head. Just how, no one seemed to know. The route was, no doubt, prepared in Washington from the map. The Lighthouse was completed January 21, 1881, and at the time the appropriation was made, had been operating about eight years without communication with the mainland. By the time communication was established between the Rock and Ft Stevens, fourteen years had elapsed since the Lighthouse was completed. The telephone line erected in 1889, was in a deplorable state by 1895 and practically had to be rebuilt. For several years, after the line was completed, the Lighthouse keepers informed the Engineers' office at Ft Stevens, whenever there was a vessel, requiring a pilot nearing, nearing the mouth of the River.

Several changes have been made during the past 75 years, in the names of rocks and points along Cannon Beach. For years, Chapman Point was known as "Little Bald Hill." "Big Bald Hill", of course is the bare area on the top of Tillamook Head. The rock now known as "Jookey Cap", was always referred to as "Lion Rock".

Mr Logan, who was well to do, had a dwelling and livery stable in Seaside, in addition to his hotel and large livery stable at the mouth of Elk Creek. The Barn was on the south side of the creek, while the hotel was on the north side. There was a floating log foot bridge. He owned the toll road, and had men working on it a good part of the summer months. The revenue was not sufficient to pay for much of the work being done on the road. Patrons of the road, either donated funds, or performed voluntee labor. Father had a team, wagon, and was working on the road, several summers in the early 90's, hauling gravel from the Nechanicum to the worst holes along the bottom land. It was in about 1894, when the Lewis and Flanders families began developing their property. Their first road to Ecola, left the beach at Chapman Point. They later built a road on the mountain, about due east from the present Ecola Parking Area, until it connected with the summit of the Elk Creek Road. This road saved a lot of hills to go up and down, and reduced the distance to about one third. Such a road now, might be a good idea. They also built the present road, leading north from Elk Creek. While they contributed generously to the up-keep of the Elk Creek toll road, there were chiselers who found the toll gate could be avoided, by taking the Lewis and Flanders' private roads. This was stopped by the erection of a pad-locked gate at the junction of the private and toll roads.

If this letter has been read this far by anyone, the reader will have, no doubt, decided he has been reading the ravings of an old man living in the past.

To make a long story short, the object of this letter is to suggest four things:-

1. That an effort be made to dig up the other cannon.
2. That a marker be placed on the spruce tree at Indian Beach.
3. That the Point just south of Hug, have its original name of Adair re-established, and a marker placed in an appropriate place.
4. That the second point south of Hug, have its original name of Meriwether re-established, and a marker placed along the highway at the site.

Would be better

Just one thing more- I was sorry to learn that it has been suggested that the Columbia Bridge at Astoria, be named the Lewis and Clark Memorial Bridge. If a historic name is desired, I believe Captain Robert Gray, who was on the River 13 years before Lewis & Clark. With the suggested name, there will always be confusion with the bridge across the Lewis and Clark River, only five or six miles away, which has been in existance for over 60 years. There is a very impressive L & bridge across the Snake, connecting Lewiston Idaho and Clarkston Wn. I believe the name of the Bridge, should be one that would designate its location. The tourist is now confused by the names of some of our Highways. We have the Banfield and Baldock Freeways, and the Barber and Herbert Hoover Boulevards. No matter what name is officially given the Bridge, it will always be known as the "Astoria Bridge!"

Respectfully yours,